

The following are some random notes about my impressions of John E. Fogarty's interest in the cause of a unified Ireland and some of the factors which I believe had a bearing on the development of that interest.

John Fogarty went to La Salle Academy in Providence and there came under the influence of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. One lesson, oft-repeated by the Brothers, made a considerable impression on the young man. That was the lesson that being a Catholic is meaningless unless one does something about it. To be a good Catholic meant doing something in the nature of Catholic Action. The same is true about being an American. One must do something affirmative to demonstrate pleasure in being an American - respecting the flag, showing a true respect for authority, taking an active part in public affairs; these and many other activities could demonstrate a person's worth as a real American.

John was brought under a parallel influence with the Dominican Fathers at Providence College where, in addition to being taught that one must do good and avoid evil, he was taught that a man worthy of his salt will stand up for the things he believes in whether in Religion, Citizenship, Social Life, or whatever. These things it seemed to me made a lasting impression and were one of the principle forces in shaping John's character. Witness his intense interest in trade unionism, almost from the moment he started as a bricklayer's apprentice. This interest culminated in his

election as the youngest President of Providence Local No. 1 in the local's history. All this it seems to me shows a driving determination to do something about whatever it is that wins John's genuine interest.

So to Ireland - and things Irish -

One of the first books John's late father suggested he should read - while he was still in grammar school - was a book entitled "Speeches From The Dock." It contains the protests of Irish patriotism delivered by Wolfe Tone, Robert Emmet, Thomas Francis Meagher, John Mitchel, O'Donovan Rossa, and many others, after their being sentenced to death for the parts they had played in the cause of Irish freedom.

Many of the speeches are highly dramatic, and it has always seemed to me that they made a lasting impression on John. Through John's late father he was brought into contact with many who were intimately familiar with Irish history, and as a growing young man he heard many tales of British oppression and the suffering in Ireland. Anyone who has grown up in an Irish home knows well how often the names of relatives are recalled and the details of village life in "the Old Country" retold over and over until many young people, though never having seen Ireland, tend to become intimately familiar with the countryside, and the people who till the soil, run the shops, and above all who keep alive in the hearts of all Irishmen the prayer for the day when Ireland will have shaken off the last evidence of the shame she suffered because of the ruthlessness of her conqueror.

These sentiments, though in all probability never expressed - even seriously contemplated by himself, were in John Fogarty's mind and heart when he went to Washington flushed with pride at being the Representative from the Second Congressional District of Rhode Island. He was assigned to four minor House Committees (the lot of all freshmen Members). Needing work to keep himself interested in whatever he is doing, he surprised many older colleagues by showing up at meetings of these committees and digging into committee records and files in order to find out what was going on. (It was probably as a result of this probing that he was elevated to a major House Committee - the old Committee on Naval Affairs.) In addition to the committee activity (it is interesting to note the four minor committees to which Mr. Fogarty was assigned have been done away with - and their work taken care of by major committees of the House), there was a lot to learn about the operations of the House of Representatives, its memberships, rules, procedure, etc. The result was John was kept busy and enjoyed himself for several months. The first real social activity which produced enthusiastic pleasure for John (there had been formal official engagements but they were taken as part of the job) was a reception at the Irish Legation. Hon. Sean Nunan was the Minister to the United States and he was tendering this reception in honor of Hon. Frank Eakin, Minister of Security for the Republic of Ireland.

I think this was in the Spring of 1942 - I'd guess around April -

and John came over to Glover Park, where we were living then, and took me to the reception with him. On the way to the Minister's home - it seems to me the reception was held there, rather than at the Delegation - John talked about Eakin, and the little knowledge John had about the part Eakin had played in the struggle which eventually brought about the measure of freedom which the Irish Republic then enjoyed. I remember his saying, in the automobile, that he was determined he was going to talk with Mr. Eakin about the separate government in the northern counties and try to satisfy himself once and for all why the government existed there. That was the first time I ever heard him use the expression "It seems to me there must be something that can be done about it." (Later as the years went on while I worked for John I heard the expression many times. When serious problems came up - the aged, wages, working conditions, social justice, international affairs --- I knew when I heard him walking up and down in his inside office that pretty soon I was going to hear him say, "It seems to me there must be something that can be done about it." That always meant long hours and discussions with many people to find the answers. It always meant serious business.)

At the Nunan home that evening John had difficulty in getting Mr. Eakin into the kind of discussion he wanted to have. There were a great many people present - from all walks of life - and realizing the importance of Eakin's talking with all or as many as possible - John gave up the struggle to capture him and settled down to a long talk with Mrs. Nunan.

I remember this very clearly now because Mrs. Nunan reminded me much of my own mother who was living in Rhode Island. John's mother had died when John was a little boy, but I think we both felt drawn to this most gracious lady. I remember the occasion especially well because I wanted to go home. It was that type of reception which was intended to run from seven 'till nine, or so, if I remember correctly, and when I expressed the desire to leave (repeated three or four times) John cut me off with a "We'll wait a while." I had forgotten his remarks about Mr. Eakin and they didn't come back to me until John had Mr. Eakin seated before the fireplace in the Minister's living room plying him with questions about Ireland's political history. Mr. Eakin was most interesting and I honestly think he was glad to have this refreshing interlude. The evening had been formal and proper and serious in the international political sense - and here he had a man after his own heart who wanted to know more and more and more and ever more about "the trouble."

I think that was the night of the germination of the seed in John's mind that "there must be something that can be done about it" - the partition of Ireland. The planting of the seed had been done long ago - but it had always - it seemed to me - been in a kind of confused garden, until that night John talked with Frank Eakin. From that moment on there was no doubt where John's thoughts went --- do something. Left to be decided was What-to-do-about-it!

I mentioned earlier the people John met when he went to gatherings of all kinds with his father. I have often thought this traveling with his



father was the greatest part of John's education. At meetings of union men and women he met many people genuinely proud of their Irish ancestry and genuinely interested in the cause of Ireland's complete freedom. There were other groups of people whom John met with his father, and at one of these meetings - an officially dedicated Irish society - John met a man who was to become a fast and cherished friend. At a meeting of the Eire Society in Pawtucket, John was introduced to Mr. Joseph Brennan, Irish Consul in Boston, who had come to the Blackstone Valley to deliver the principal speech at an Eire Society banquet.

John enjoyed talking with Mr. Brennan and on parting expressed the hope they would meet again. Years later Mr. Brennan was transferred by his Government to Washington, where he still serves as Counsellor to the Ambassador and Minister Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Eire.

Because a foundation had been laid many years ago, among mutually respected associates, the two found it very easy to build what has become a lasting friendship which involves social and personal interests and associations, as well as the purely political area.

It was discussions with Joseph Desmond Brennan which ultimately resulted in John Fogarty arriving at the decision "I know what can be done about it." A critic could say, "It took him a long time to make up his mind" - but it must be said that John is a Member of the House of Representatives of the United States - as such he felt it was imperative that he refuse to be swayed by purely emotional concerns. His decision on

"what can be done about it" was a carefully thought out and calmly arrived at decision.

Once having reached a decision all that was left was the drafting of the correct legal and parliamentary language and the presentation of the issue to the Congress of the United States for an expression of its opinion.

An interesting piece of research, at least for political scientists, would be a digging out job to find out how many "crusaders" have espoused a cause - caught the brilliant flash of the sun (of publicity) on their swords (a carefully worded speech) and then "lady-of-the-lake" like allowed the fruit of the great campaign to die on the vine.

In justice it should be said that John Fogarty possesses his fair share of the normal failings to which all men are heir. In setting these words to paper I confess I am willing to admit John might have lost his enthusiasm for the cause had it not been for two elements - John's constant desire to discuss the merits of his proposal - even with those who disagreed with him (a couple of times almost violently) - and the uncanny knack he seemed to have for falling in with people who poured fuel on the fire of his own enthusiasm.

An example - Several Members of the Appropriations Committee of the House went to Europe soon after the cessation of hostilities in Europe. The prime purpose of this trip was to guarantee - if such a word is permitted - that many of the lessons learned after the first World War -

anent the wasteful use of United States government property - should be brought freshly to mind. A very important convoy and naval operation during the war had been centered in Londonderry, in Ireland. Here the United States had spent billions in construction and maintenance. This was a most important stop on the committee's crowded schedule. The committee intended to fly from Derry to London - take a boat across the channel - then fly throughout the remainder of the itinerary. This journey was undertaken just prior to the winding up of the work of the House Appropriations Committee, to which important Committee John Fogarty had been elected, so time was of the essence.

As luck would have it - the group left Derry on schedule, but under adverse weather conditions, and a forced landing was made in Dublin. The weather worsened and the group was forced to remain in Dublin for two full days. At John's suggestion an appointment was arranged with the Prime Minister, Eamonn DeValera. John, in telling me about it later, said he got a great thrill out of reminding Mr. DeValera of the time he visited Providence and spoke from the City Hall steps and later at old Emery's Theater on Mathewson Street. John told Mr. DeValera about his father's pride in taking part in the formation of the AARIR (American Association for the Recognition of the Irish Republic). Because Mr. DeValera had traveled so extensively in the United States, he was an interesting companion and arrangements were made to have him meet the entire Congressional group at dinner that evening.



On another occasion, to save time, while two groups of Congressional Committees were traveling in Europe, arrangements were made to have the members of both groups meet in London, England, so that all could sail for home on the USS MANHATTAN. John was attached to a group of three which left Paris by air early in the morning of a cold, rainy October day. The plane was forced to give up its original plans and landed in Dublin. John and his two colleagues had a brief opportunity to renew some old acquaintances and set off late in the evening for Cork City. Arrangements had been made by wire to board the MANHATTAN there the following morning.

John told me later that he met, on that evening, one of the greatest characters he has ever known in his life, the Mayor of Cork. The latter, too, had been "in the trouble" and regaled John and his two colleagues throughout the night with his anecdotes. No one thought of sleep - the Mayor rode with them in the lighter to the ship soon after dawn.

I mentioned Dublin and Cork City, and of course, Derry, as the places John visited in Ireland. Each time he was there he was under pressure from the standpoint of time - and from the standpoint of being an elected official in the House of Representatives of the United States. There are obvious reasons why he had to be circumspect in his talks with Irish officialdom.

However, he did tell me that he cried when he saw Killarney - it was cold and a bit dreary - but despite that he could see all the beauty his parents had described to him. We have pictures at home of John hanging

upside down kissing the Blarney Stone. I never could understand why he felt compelled to go through that agony. I recall John talking about the "feather-bed" in the Dublin, or is it Wicklow, mountains. He met some Gael-toch people in Galway and I can still hear him laughing over his difficulty in making himself understood. I don't think he saw much of Limerick. I remember he said he took a bus from O'Connell Street out to see the famed - infamous I should probably say - Treaty Stone. That was just before a plane home and there was little time. He talked some about Mayo - but I think his opinion of the area was influenced - I mean suffered - by books he's read, like "The Famine." I've talked with him several times about his desire to take a nice long vacation in Ireland and really "tour" the island, in the manner in which we Americans think of "touring."

I think you will get the idea that from all this it seems to me John early in life - very, very early - learned a love of Ireland and things Irish. His family background exposed him to Irish people and things Irish. In his heart was a willingness to be in favor of things Irish - and because of his personal experience and the people he met, there developed in his mind a desire to be in favor of things Irish. Having taken up the cause - the thing that still worries him about everything (including his latest cause "exceptional children") "there-must-be-something-we-can-do-about-it" brought about the attempt at doing something - the plea that the Congress of the United States express its revulsion at the contemptible cutting up of the beauty of the western world.

The enactment by the British Parliament, in May of 1949, of the so-called Ireland Bill, crystalized John Fogarty's resentment over partition and caused him to demand that the United States express its resentment at this latest act of injustice by Britain.

The so-called Ireland Bill declared that Northern Ireland will never cease to be a part of the United Kingdom without the express consent of the Parliament of Northern Ireland. This was a deliberate and uncalled for rebuke to Irish patriots in Ireland who had been struggling since 1920 to wipe out the insulting dismemberment of a natural nation.

John's immediate reaction was to sound out other Members of the House of Representatives. After explaining the situation thoroughly he found that many were in sympathy with him. After careful consideration John introduced in the House of Representatives House Joint Resolution 270 which read -

In order to encourage a peaceful and prosperous order in Ireland but with no intention of imposing any particular form of political or economic association upon its people, it is hereby

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring): That the Congress favors the political federation of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland unless the clear majority of all the people of Ireland, in a free plebiscite, determine and declare to the contrary.

The introduction of this Resolution was intended to exercise an element of persuasion both on the British Parliament and the Government of Ireland to the end that - since the United States had expended - and was continuing to expend - fabulous sums in money, treasure, knowledge, and too, human lives - both these governments would utilize the good offices of the United States to reunify Ireland and wipe out this last remaining cause of

bitterness - thus fostering better relations for the welfare of all of Europe - and of the world, through the promotion of friendly relations between nations.

Frequent pleas for a hearing on the Resolution by the House Committee on Foreign Affairs were unavailing for many months. John then undertook to win the support of the Democratic Leadership in the House. It was these latter efforts which guaranteed at least that the Committee would hear his case.

On April 28, 1950, the Committee met to consider the Fogarty Resolution and approximately fifty witnesses appeared in support of the Resolution. They included many Representatives in Congress, at least two State Governors, and many representatives of National organizations whom John had interested in this cause.

The 81st Congress failed to act on the Resolution.

A similar Resolution was introduced in the 82nd Congress and the tedious and tiring task of winning to the support of the cause a sufficient number of Members of the House to assure success started all over.

In the 83rd Congress John introduced a Discharge Petition which, under the Rules of the House, provide for bringing a measure before the full membership of the House without the usual favorable committee report, and clearance by the House Rules Committee. Very rarely during the history of the country has such a drastic measure been successful but John felt it was the only alternative to the stagnating process of waiting for a new

Committee hearing. As months passed, the number of names on the list grew steadily, albeit slowly. When the 82d Congress adjourned sine die the Discharge Petition contained 168 names - just 50 short of the required number.

The present Congress is the 84th and it has today pending before it House Resolution 32 providing for this expression of Congress' sentiments regarding the Unity of Ireland.

During these years John had been growing ever more intimate with the Irish Embassy and its officials. He was the principal speaker at the farewell banquet tendered in honor of his old friend, Sean Nunan, Minister for Ireland, who was returning home after many years of faithful service to his country. Probably the highlight of all John's activities during these years was the speech he delivered at the testimonial banquet tendered to the Honorable Charles Taft, newly appointed Ambassador to Ireland. This was at the Carlton Hotel on May 27, 1953.

That speech is well worth reading by anyone at all interested in the cause of Irish unity.

Particularly thrilling was the close of the speech in which John had paid glowing tribute to the character of Mr. Taft, the Ambassador who would soon sail to Ireland, there to represent the United States of America. In a peroration which brought the large throng to its feet as one man, John said:



"Where our country is concerned, we stand as one against all the world.

"That sense of unity, I know, is planted firmly in your heart--- just as is your devotion to the cause of justice.

"We rejoice, Mr. Ambassador, that our country is to be represented by a man with your sense of values. We know that man does not become an expert in the language of a people unless he admires that people---and knowing their language, a man knows the people---knows how they deliberately chose the way of poverty rather than abandon their religious faith---knows of their willingness to sacrifice for their neighbor, knows how they cherish and willingly pay for the freedom which all people must have to win the dignity God intended for them.

"I rejoice that my country will have a representative worthy of my country's generosity and idealism to treat with the free and proud people who stand so willing and anxious to be our friends in a day when America seeks friends who cherish freedom so much that they do not count the cost in dollars, pounds, or blood.

"I pray that all of us here may soon gather again to acclaim that day when, like our own America, Ireland is united under one flag from sea to shining sea."